

Approved Meeting Minutes

Middle School Building Committee Meeting

November 18, 2013 – 8:15 a.m.

BOE Conference Room, 3rd Floor Annex Building

5 Linsley Street, North Haven, CT

Committee Members in Attendance:

Michael Brandt, Miriam Brody, Lou Coppola, Sr., Gary Johns (committee chairman), Bruce Morris, Joseph Porto, Michelle Spader (committee secretary), Dyann Vissicchio (committee vice-chair), Walter Nester, Jr.

Absent: Goldie Adele

Others in Attendance:

Kristine Carling, Dr. Robert Cronin, Jeffrey Donofrio, Phil Diana, David Mikos, Phil Piazza, Edward Swinkoski, Diversified Technology Consultants (DTC); Shay Atluru, Rick Morse, Perkins Eastman; Joe Costa, Fritz Morris

Meeting called to order at: 8:15 am by chairman, Gary Johns.

Motion to approve the minutes of November 4, 2013 meeting: Motion by Bruce Morris and seconded by Joseph Porto. The motion passed unanimously.

DTC & Perkins Eastman were invited back today so that we could further discuss the middle school options.

Option 3 was discussed (build new on Bailey Rd). Fritz Morris explained that this option allows for the existing middle school to be torn down after the new one is built and the town ends up with more fields once the school is demolished. Design scenarios were shown, but are in no way concrete – the town would need to identify what the program requirements are (particulars on the field needs).

Option 4 (mixture of new & renovate – hybrid) is the least explored option. This concept came about when Perkins Eastman met with the Board of Education and town officials. They took the program information from option #3 (build new) and came up with this alternative approach. We are not locked into the design presented. There are multiple design possibilities with this option. \$62.9 M price tag/\$45.6 M cost to the town with approx sq footage of 130K sq ft.

With this option there would be 3-3.5 acres available for ball fields once existing middle school is demolished. Various configurations options were discussed. The cost for option 4 (hybrid) does not include moving the football stadium.

There are multiple opportunities for parking with dedicated areas for faculty as well as parent drop off area and even a schematic showing the current bus loop being maintained.

The committee was shown a bar chart detailing the approximate schedule of completion and project duration for each of the options. Note: Option 2 – Gateway – was eliminated as an option at the November 4, 2013 committee meeting.

Option 1 - Like New Renovation: January 1, 2018/50 month duration – Must be done in small increments because the school is occupied during construction. As the project components are completed, they are occupied.

Option 3 - All New School: July 1, 2017/44 month duration – When the new building is completed, the old building gets knocked down and the site can be reconfigured anyway deemed necessary. Turf takes 1 year to establish, so fields will not be able to be used for an additional year.

Option 4 -Renovation & New (aka hybrid): July 1, 2017/44 month duration – The new academic wing is being constructed at the same time as the renovation to the common spaces is occurring. The common spaces will need to be renovated in pieces and decisions will need to be made on how to accommodate students in each of the common spaces (gyms, cafeteria, and auditorium) when this construction is occurring.

During the 18 month construction period, time slots for renovations will need to be established. Timing will be key. Ideas discussed included starting the gym renovations in the spring so that the outdoors can be utilized for classes (weather permitting) to lessen the impact of the gymnasium being out of commission during the renovation. Since there are 2 gyms, one gym at a time could be renovated to further reduce impact/disruption. Also, the current cafeteria is oversized, so one side could be worked on while keeping the other fully functional during the renovation.

Dyann Vissicchio questioned where the children would change for gym during locker room renovations. It was explained that some of these issues could be minimized by using the summers (3 summer worth of construction) to renovate areas such as this. Mr. Piazza also mentioned that currently the students' schedules rotate between P.E. and health. Working with the schedule and having all the kids take health while the gym is being worked on is another possibility.

Kristine Carling asked which spaces would be renovated. It was emphasized that nothing is set in stone, but the current thought is all the assembly spaces – auditorium, cafeteria, 2 gymnasiums, and locker rooms – all substantially gutted.

Joseph Porto questioned how the committee can sell an option to North Haven residents when we don't have any specifics on the plans. Joe Costa explained Perkins Eastman's purpose was to help the committee narrow down to a single option that can then be developed for public consumption. Diagrams, schedule of completion and cost comparisons were provided to the committee to assist in the decision making process. The actual design is to be determined once an option is chosen.

Dr. Cronin asked what the 'renovate as new' option would mean for the auditorium. It was determined that this would include such things as new seating, new lighting, and a new sound system. Accessibility was also mentioned.

Fritz Morris explained that there are options for either a 3 story or a 2 story classroom wing, but the 2 story would require a larger footprint.

Mr. Piazza feels the 'hybrid' option is more feasible as it causes less disruption to the education process than the 'renovate as new'. He spoke about the level of distraction there would be if construction was going on in the building during the school day and expressed concerns about having children outside the building in temporary classrooms as well as safety and building access issues. He also expressed that that he is not sure how he feels about having a 3 story wing and will do further research/talk to others who actually have a 3 floor configuration.

Bruce Morris discussed how costly change orders can be with a 'renovate as new' and mentioned that if you 'build new' you eliminate them. He favors this cleaner option and feels the citizens of North Haven will be able to better see where their dollars went with a 'new construction' rather than a 'renovate as new'. Lou Coppola talked about the logistics of keeping the staging area away from the school children as well.

'Renovate as new' is the riskiest of the remaining options, according to Fritz Morris. Due to all the unknowns (potential for PCB's, unknown conditions, opening up walls & ceilings and finding additional problems). Also, working around children makes it riskier. There are higher contingency dollars allotted to the 'renovate as new' option because of the higher risks involved.

Cost Summary:

Estimated Costs	Renovate	New	Hybrid
Hard Costs	\$49.66	\$49.63	\$51.19
Soft Costs	\$11.75	\$10.83	\$11.73
Total	\$61.41	\$60.46	\$62.92
*Net Cost to Town	\$41.43	\$46.68	\$45.62

****Based on eligible rates of 39.64% for renovations and 29.64% for new construction***

These net costs address demolition as well as a field creation and a restoration component.

It may be possible to garner the higher reimbursement rate for the entire hybrid project. Towns such as Meriden, Norwalk, and Greenwich have treated their renovation projects that had a 'new' component to them as a full 'renovate as new' project and successfully applied the higher reimbursement rate to their entire project. This could require discussion with the commissioner, and it could require legislation. It would have to be pursued further and it could drive the cost of the hybrid option down to \$41.8M if we were able to get the higher reimbursement rate for the entire project.

If the 'new' option was chosen, the site on which the middle school currently stands could house a number of new fields. There would be a net gain in fields if the school was located along Bailey Road. However, there would be a loss of fields during the construction phase (space around Vanacore field).

It was also discussed that if the 'new' option was chosen, the plan would be to keep the 3 story academic wing as far away as possible from the Bailey Road side neighborhood. There are several things that can be done to mitigate the impact to the neighborhood.

Ed Swinkoski pointed out that the hybrid option has a net cost listed at \$45.62 cost to the town, but back in May the report stated it was \$41.5. Also, it was mentioned that the new addition would be about 55,000 square feet. Swinkoski wanted to know which information is correct. Morse said they revisited the approach to the program and made some changes and also the current square footage is based on the Ed Spec. The correct figure is actually 88,000 square feet, rather than the 55,000 for the hybrid option.

Gary Johns inquired as to when the Ed Spec is going to be finalized, as the square footage necessary is a key component. Dr. Cronin said it should be determined after the November Board of Education meeting. Dr. Cronin does not anticipate any other significant changes to the square footage. It was stressed that fields are not included in the Ed Spec. The only requirement in regards to fields is access to a field.

David Mikos discussed the overutilization of our current fields and the need to rest our grass fields. He feels very strongly about adding a turf field as part of the overall project. Gary Johns inquired as to how much a turf field costs and was told it would be an additional \$2.5 million (approximately). Phil Diana said it doesn't make sense to have a turf field without lighting and that would be an additional cost as well. The track also needs to be refurbished. Refurbishment would be approximately \$225,000. A new track (new drainage, grading, etc) could cost \$750,000 - \$1 million.

Rick Morse discussed the acreage available for the fields. 16 acres of fields would be available with the 'new' option, as opposed to 'renovate as new', which gives 12 acres, and the 'hybrid' option gives 15 acres. There was a great deal of discussion in regards to the fields.

The multi story portion of the building in the 'new' option would run north/south and not along Bailey road.

Mike Brandt expressed that the two options he is leaning towards right now are the 'new' and the 'hybrid'. Brandt believes that athletic directors, music directors and other extracurricular activity leaders should be consulted as to what their needs are when it comes to determining our field needs. Brandt wanted to know if the Board of Ed sees an advantage in having the middle school and high school buildings close together, as opposed to having the fields in between the two schools. Dr. Cronin believes there is an advantage of having them close together. The 'new' option creates a great distance between the 2 schools and may require us to do something different in terms of pick up and drop off of students on the buses. However, Cronin does not feel the separation will have a big impact on the

academic program. Mr. Piazza doesn't feel that the distance is a very big issue as long as a safe pathway is provided for the students to access the fields from the school.

Gary Johns said he would like the committee to openly discuss the 3 remaining options at the next meeting on December 2, 2013 and narrow down to the most feasible option.

Michelle Spader added that she feels that before the board can commit to an option, phase 1 testing should be done. It was mentioned previously that phase 1 doesn't include any physical testing, but is rather an historical review on the lands usage. Actual testing is a phase 2 component. However, if your phase 1 doesn't show any history of spills, gas stations, laundromats, factories or things of that nature, it gives you a pretty good indication of whether a phase 2 would even be necessary. Spader feels that before we can rule out an option or pick the option we present to the public, we should at least have this information so that an informed decision can be made.

Phase 1 would only cost between \$2500-3000 and only takes a couple of weeks to complete. However, this committee does not have a budget. Chairperson Johns asked Attorney Donofrio if he felt we should undertake this testing. Donofrio said if it is a serious option, a phase 2 would be needed. The town would have to go out to bid for a phase 2.

Motion to adjourn at 9:31 am by Bruce Morris. Seconded by Michael Brandt.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Spader, Committee Secretary